The Day of Loss or Gain

In the Light of Quran & Sunnah

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

We have been granted intelligence, perception and freewill in this world so that we can be tested by Allah who tells us in Surah Al-Mulk: "He Who created Death and Life that He may try you which of you is best in deed."(Quran 67:2)

This test gives us a choice between two divergent paths; one of submission and obedience to Him, and the other of disobedience and transgression.

Allah has used different ways to guide us to succeed by following the straight path of obedience.Three of them are very important:

1. Every person has been endowed with intelligence and perception. The Quran tells us that the reality has been firmly implanted within each person's sense perception that this Universe is not without a Creator but indeed has a Creator who also sustains it and administers to all of its affairs. It is for this reason that man keeps coming back again and again to the subject of Tauheed, the oneness of Allah.The heart of even the most stubborn unbeliever some time testifies the existence of one Lord. Every mushrik, one who has associated partners with God, is forced to acknowledge at some point in his life that there is only One who can solve his problems and that all his other deities have no true worth. There are so many signs in the Universe which point to the existence of a Creator that with a little observation and reflection, every person would reach the same conclusion - that this magnificent existence of life and the Universe could not have come into being on its own.

2. The other amazing thing that has been implanted within a person is his conscience which bothers him whenever he does something wrong, the realization that it was wrong makes a person feels a sense of shame. The Quran calls it Nafsul Lawwama - the self- reproaching soul that has been given to every human being to enable him to distinguish between the right and the wrong.

3. Through the medium of prophets, Allah has sent divine revelation, the last of which is the Quran, a miracle that has been preserved in its original form and will remain a guidance for the entire mankind for all times.

Heath, sickness, adversity, prosperity - all the things that happen to us in this world, are only a test for us and people are tested differently in different circumstances. Finally, there will be a day when this test will be over and on that day, the Day of Resurrection, the laws of the entire universe will change completely. Every person will be held accountable for his actions in his worldly life.If he was thankful and obedient to Allah, he will be rewarded with everlasting rewards in the form of Paradise and if he had led a life of transgression and sin, then Hell awaits him as recompense for his deeds.

On the Day of Resurrection, the example of those who regarded their worldly resources as their private possessions and squandered them will be that of a bank clerk who starts thinking that the money in the bank vault belongs to him.

Proof of Resurrection through use of Logic

Allah has made everything in this world in pairs. They are 2 parts of one reality and together they complement each other; if one part is lacking in something, the other completes it. Examples of this are man and woman, thirst and water etc.Water has no importance without the sense of thirst. If thirst exists then naturally the need for water is self evident.It is an undeniable fact that it is every person's dream to live forever and no one wants to die, but death is a harsh reality. It is therefore not Death but the

Hereafter that is the pair to this worldly life as without one, the other would be like being thirsty but having no water to drink.

Man hates to see or suffer injustice and he wants the oppressor or criminal to be severely punished, but the system of this world is strange as criminals manage to evade the law. Even of those who are caught, the punishment is not commensurate with their crime. People like Firaun and Hitler are examples of this; people who intoxicated by their wealth and power, not only committed injustice against millions of people but the results of their cruelty effected generations of people.

How then can we explain such injustice except by accepting that there is a Hereafter where we will be compensated for all the injustice we have suffered in this world? It is in the Hereafter, the pair of this world that our unfulfilled desires will also be fulfilled.

Resurrection is a necessary component of God's attribute of mercy. It does not befit the majesty of the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful that He should do something without purpose or leave things unfinished. Therefore, He will bring a day when his pious servants will be granted lasting rewards and the wicked will get their just dues. If there was no Resurrection, then it means that the Creator is not Gracious and Merciful and that to Him, justice and oppression, goodness and evil, obedience and transgression are equal or rather, that criminals are better off as they are free to do whatever they want. Is it possible that the Creator who created such an efficient system of maintaining His creation will let some of them just enjoy their lives in frivolity and merry-making while others suffer and let the matter end there? Are the privileged to have no accountability or accompanying responsibilities for their God-given abilities and resources? Should the One who has created us so perfectly not have any demands from us? Naturally enough, He will hold us accountable one Day. Those who realized what their responsibilities were and discharged them fully will be rewarded and those who failed to do so will have to pay the price of their heedlessness and negligence.

The conscience present in every person that enables him to differentiate between right and wrong would be meaningless if there was no Day of Judgment. It is this same conscience that keeps reminding us that good and bad are not equal and hence they should not have the same compensation.

If an employee who works hard and one who doesn't are both given the same promotion we would protest at this injustice. Then how is it possible that the One who has put the concept of justice in our basic nature be unjust? That is impossible.

Underestimating Allah's power to be able to make such a grand event of Resurrection is the reason why people refuse to accept the Day of Judgement. In the Quran, invariably after mentioning this event, Allah invites us to ponder and reflect on the wonders of this world. When a person uses his powers of observation, he will notice how a dead earth comes to life when colorless rain pours forth from the sky, producing green fields and vegetation, scented flowers, delicious fruit and trees that reach up to the sky. He will marvel at how Allah produces pure milk for us to drink from a place within the bodies of cattle that is between excretions and blood. The different flavors, textures and covering of fruits, vegetables and grain all created for humans will amaze him. Man's own birth is nothing short of a miracle; the combination of sperm and ovum lodged in the uterus for nine months and its development is awe-inspiring, not to mention all the faculties that the baby is endowed with. The whole process

of growth, from childhood to adolescence to adulthood and then finding mates to live in harmony with, exhibits Allah's power to make anything He wants come to pass.

People are amazed when someone can make sounds be emitted from a stone by waving a magic wand. Yet, when Allah produces innumerable human beings from just two drops of fluid and gives them such beautiful form with the ability to speak and be understood, far from being amazed, no one is even surprised. Although every creation of Allah is unique, we are not impressed because we are seeing it day in and day out. If we truly observe and ponder on any of His creation, we will definitely come to the conclusion that it is indeed not difficult for Allah to raise us up again. The important thing is to develop the habit of observing and reflecting on things around us and for such a person the whole of world becomes like an illustrated book. Such a person will become closer to his Lord, increase in Eeman and reach a state of absolute conviction that the life in the Hereafter does exist.

Those who reject the concept of resurrection cannot deny the proofs of its existence; the only reason they do not want to accept it is that if they do, they will have to impose certain restrictions on themselves and discipline their life style. Despite the possibility of burning in an everlasting Hell, they find themselves unwilling to change in this short life when in fact, by doing so they will be able to secure their future in the Hereafter. It is this Hereafter that is everlasting in nature and where we will live a life full of all kinds of perpetual pleasures.

If a child is told in its mother's womb that there is a vast and beautiful universe outside its cramped and limited world, he will not believe it. Naturally we will laugh at him knowing that his limited intelligence and perception is not able to visualize what awaits him. It is only when the child enters the world that he will realize that he was in a virtual prison that was vastly different and in no way comparable to this outside world. But the same human being who finds himself unable to believe that when he dies and his body is nothing but dust, he will have an Afterlife. Unwilling to accept that this world is like a dismal prison compared to the pleasures that await him in the Hereafter, he again exhibits his lack of intelligence.

People think this world to be the place of success or failure when in fact the outcome of one's actions here is totally meaningless and the real success or failure is that of the Hereafter.

"The Day that He assembles you (all) for a day of Assembly that will be a day of mutual loss and gain (among you)." (Quran,64:9).

A person's Afterlife begins the day he dies and unfortunately, no one knows how close he is to his death. So essentially our life span is the only thing between us and our afterlife. It is possible that we may sleep one night and never wake up or that we may suddenly die in an accident.

The Day of Resurrection is a day about which all the prophets came to warn us and it will be a day when not only will individual deeds be taken into account, but also the good or evil that our deeds generated. If our advice or example guided or misguided people, their deeds will be credited to us even after we die. It is for this reason that one of the companions of the Prophet (SAW) said, "He is truly unfortunate whose sins do not die with him."

The Horrors of the Day of Resurrection Described in the Quran

"The Trumpet will (just) be sounded when all that are in the heavens and on earth will swoon except such as it will please Allah (to exempt). Then will a second one be sounded when behold they will be standing and looking on! And the Earth will shine with the glory of its Lord: the Record (of Deeds)

will be placed (open); the prophets and the witnesses will be brought forward: and a just decision pronounced between them; and they will not be wronged (in the least). And to every soul will be paid in full (the fruit) of its deeds and (Allah) knows best all that they do." **(39:68-70)**

- *"And no friend will ask after a friend. Though they will be put in sight of each other the sinner's desire will be: would that he could redeem himself from the Penalty of that Day by (sacrificing) his children, his wife and his brother, his kindred who sheltered him. And all that is on earth so it could deliver him."* **(70:10-14)**
- *"Verily We have warned you of a Penalty near, the Day when man will see (the Deeds) which his hands have sent forth and the Unbeliever will say "Woe unto me! Would that I were (mere) dust!"* **(78:40)**

The Horrors of the Day of Resurrection According to the Ahadith

- *"By Allah, if you could know what I know, you would laugh little and weep much; you would not enjoy your wives in beds, and would rush into streets and jungles in search of Allah's refuge."* **(Tirmidhi)**
- *"On the Day of Resurrection the feet of the son of Adam will not move away till he is questioned about five matters: on what he spent his life, in doing what he made his youth pass away; from where he acquired his property, on what he spent it, and what he did regarding what he knew."* **(Tirmidhi)**

Testimony on the Day of Resurrection

- **The Earth:** *" It(Earth) will say that he or she did this and this on such and such day".* **(Tirmidhi)**
- **The Body Parts:** *"That Day shall We set a seal on their mouths. But their hands will speak to Us and their feet bear witness to all that they did."* **(Quran 36:65)**
- **The Angels:** *"Behold two (guardian angels) appointed to learn (his doings) learn (and note them) one sitting on the right and one on the left. Not a word does he utter but there is a sentinel by him ready (to note it)."* **(Quran 50:17-18)**
- **The Record of Deeds:** *"On seeing the Book of Deeds: they will say "Ah! Woe to us! What a book is this! It leaves out nothing small or great but takes account thereof!" They will find all that they did placed before them."* **(Quran 18:49)**

The Final Result

"Therefore when there comes the great overwhelming (Event). The Day when Man shall remember (all) that he strove for. And Hell-Fire shall be placed in full view for (all) to see. Then for such as had transgressed all bounds and had preferred the life of this world, the Abode will be Hell-Fire; And for such as had entertained the fear of standing before their Lord's (tribunal) and had restrained (their) soul from lower desires, their abode will be the Garden." **(Quran 79: 34-41)**

Belief in Intercession

According to the Ahadith, the prophets and the pious people, in fact, even the good deeds of a person will intercede for him on the Day or Resurrection. However it is important to know the principle based on which this intercession will take place and those that are eligible for it. It must be understood clearly that intercession is equivalent to only a supplication or a request by those making it. In the Quran it has been clearly explained:

"Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permits?" **(2:255)**

"They offer no intercession except for those who are acceptable and they stand in awe and reverence of His (glory)". **(21:28)**

This means that no one will be able to step forward and intercede on anyone's behalf unless Allah permits them, nor will Allah be influenced in any way or be obligated to grant their petition. There is no one who dares to interfere in Allah's matters and intercession, according to what we have been told in the Quran, will be with the permission and approval of Allah. Intercession will not be able to make what is wrong right, but will be accepted by Allah in order to show appreciation and honor for those making the petition. It will be only be allowed in favour of those people who led their lives with Eeman, doing righteous deeds, but due to certain human weaknesses and sins, they fell short of the requirements to enter Paradise. With the intercession of prophets, the truthful, the martyrs and the pious people, it is hoped that such people will be considered worthy enough to be admitted into Paradise. Allah knows best.

The Prophet (SAW) has clearly told us about those categories of people who will be deprived of intercession .

Regarding innovators, the Prophet (SAW) said: *"Lo! Some men from my followers will be brought and taken towards the left side, whereupon I will say, 'O Lord, (these are) my companions!' It will be said, 'You do not know what new things they introduced (into the religion) after you."* **(Bukhari)**

Regarding embezzlement from public coffers, the Prophet (SAW) said: *"I do not want anyone of you to come to me on the Day of Resurrection, carrying over his neck a sheep that will be bleating. Such a person will (then) say, 'O Muhammad! (please intercede for me)'. I will say to him. 'I can't help you, for I conveyed Allah's Message to you.' Similarly, I do not want anyone of you to come to me carrying over his neck a camel that will be grunting. Such a person (then) will say 'O Muhammad! (please intercede for me).' I will say to him, 'I can't help you for I conveyed Allah's message to you. "* **(Bukhari)**

As for those believers who do not have enough good deeds to their credit, they will stay in Hell and be punished for a certain period of time before they will enter Paradise. It is to be remembered that this is the same Hell, a moment of which is enough to make you forget all the pleasures of this world.

Nuh (AS)'s son, Abraham (AS)'s father, Lut (AS)'s wife and Aasia's husband, according to the Quran, are inmates of Hell. Despite the closeness of the parent-child, husband-wife relationship, and the Prophets having a special communication with Allah, they were unsuccessful in saving their relatives from the Hell-fire. How then, can we expect any leniency when we are not even focused on using the limited time in this world to earn for the Hereafter?

Perpetuity of The Hereafter

It is important to remember that it is not sufficient to just believe in the Hereafter, but to constantly remind oneself that the life there will be perpetual. There will be no end, no death; it will go on forever. When we have even a moment of happiness in this world, there is always the constant fear that this could vanish anytime. Unlike this worldy life, if one attains success in the Hereafter, there will no fear of the future or regrets of the past. On the other hand, if one becomes an inmate of Hell, the punishment will be unbearable and lasting and there will be nothing but regrets at the lost opportunity. We need to remind ourselves of this again and again and to such an extent, that the disregard for worldly pleasures becomes so ingrained in us that it takes us further and further away from disobedience to Allah. The person who can vividly visualize Paradise will spend his time in desiring and supplicating for it and will seek refuge from Hell several times a day. He will never destroy his Hereafter by indulging in greed for the vanities of this temporal life.

The Prophet (SAW) said: *"If anyone's intention is to seek the Hereafter, Allah will place his sufficiency in his heart and order his affairs, and the world will come to him submissively; but if anyone's intention is to seek worldly good, Allah will place poverty before him and disorder his affairs, and only so much of it as has been ordained for him will come to him."* **(Tirmidhi)**

Contemplating Death

The Prophet (SAW) said: *"You should remember the reality that brings an end to all worldly joys and pleasures, namely, death."* **(Tirmidhi)**

We should try sometimes to visualize death at night either after Isha(prayer) or if Allah enables one to perform Tahajjud, in the late hours of the night. Imagine that while going somewhere you are severely injured in an accident. You are being taken to the hospital and the doctors are trying hard to save your life. Your relatives are standing close by and are very worried. After desperately trying to save your life, the doctors give up. Imagine yourself dead and your body being brought back home. Imagine the bathing, the shrouding, the crying of the relatives and friends, then being carried away on a bier for the funeral prayer and then to the graveyard. Imagine yourself being laid in the grave, then slabs being put over it and then after throwing earth on it, everyone going home. Imagine the pitch darkness, the loneliness, the sounds of the insects, the maggots eating your flesh. Even if there were no other punishment, would lying like with all the senses awake not be enough punishment?

Now think of the deeds you would have taken with you. Have you fulfilled your responsibilities? Do you owe someone something, which you could perhaps have returned but did not get around to doing it due to carelessness? If you had been unfair to someone and had already realized your mistake, did your pride stop you from apologizing and asking for forgiveness? Imagine how it would feel knowing that you will never get an opportunity to make amends! Now think of all the opportunities to do good deeds that you lost. Perhaps you could have given financial help to your neighbour, but chose instead, to spend that money on expensive suit that has been left behind for someone else to wear. If you had given the money to someone in need, that deed would have accompanied you to the grave. Try to visualize the distress you will feel at your inability to get another chance to do good deeds. After this, list all your shortcomings and let the tears of shame roll down your cheeks. Then thank Allah that you still have the opportunity to do all those deeds whose non-performance can take you to Hell and that you still have time to make amends.

The Way Ahead

We need to realize that the life we are leading is merely a journey and our destination awaits us after our death. Only with this realization will the joys of this world cease to preoccupy the intelligent traveler, nor will the sorrows bother him. He will know that it is only, and only, a road he is traveling on and that it is not his destination. If he faces difficulties on this road he will bear them with patience and constancy and continue along the way. If he encounters joys, he will be grateful that he was saved from adversity and this will make his journey even more enjoyable. As tempting as it may be, he will not linger along the way, but will continue to move on towards his real destination.

A traveler who does not know the way and realizes that the terrain is rough, will travel by day and with a reliable guide. Our journey of life can lead us to our real destination only if we make Allah our guide, friend and helper. Only He knows the twists and turns along the way and our abilities and shortcomings. We should travel on this road after strengthening our belief in

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His power and constantly seek His help through supplication. He has given us this news in His book, the Quran, sent through his beloved Prophet:

"And if as is sure there comes to you guidance from Me, whosoever follows My guidance on them shall be no fear nor shall they grieve. But those who reject Faith and belie Our Signs they shall be Companions of the Fire; they shall abide therein." **(2:38-39)**

Here we have been told to follow His commands given to us through the Quran and it is possible to do this only if we understand its meaning. Understanding the Quran and following its commands in the light of the Sunnah is the only way to real success. Doing this will ensure that we stay focused on the Hereafter as there is probably not a single page of the Quran that does not refer to the Hereafter. Daily reading of a portion of the Quran and understanding it with the help of a translation is truly effective in reminding you of the Hereafter, thus enabling you to be steadfast in following and staying on the straight path. Along with reading, understanding and pondering on the Quran, we should also make it a daily practice to read some portion from the collection of hadith. It is then that we will travel on the road of life with the light that Allah refers to in the following verse in the Quran:

"O you that believe! Fear Allah and believe in His apostle and He will bestow on you a double portion of His Mercy: He will provide for you a light by which you shall walk (straight in your path) and He will forgive you (your past): For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful". **(57:28)**

LASTLY

The more important a person considers a particular exam, the more he prepares for it. Every moment is extremely precious for a conscientious and good student who wants to do well in his exams. So he will refrain from what he perceives as time wasting activities, even to the extent of skipping his meals and cutting down on his sleep.

If this is his attitude for an exam on which his life does not depend and for which he is able to try again if he fails, then imagine the kind of preparation required for an exam on which our entire future in the Hereafter depends, particularly when there will be no second chance given if we fail. It is time that we stop being heedless and wake up to the fact that we have only this little time, which we call our lifetime in which to prepare for a major exam. If we do not make full use of our life to prepare for this exam and fail it, we will never get another opportunity to do it again.

"Herein will they cry aloud (for assistance): "Our Lord! bring us out: we shall work righteousness, not the (deeds) we used to do!" Did we not give you long enough life so that he that would, should receive admonition? And (moreover) the warner came to you. So taste (the fruit of your deeds): for the Wrongdoers there is no helper." (Quran, 35:37)

The more we ponder on this verse, the better. This is the time to take heed while we are still alive and cannot see death ahead of us. We certainly do not want to be amongst those who will be pleading for a second chance to believe in the true sense of the word and do good deeds but will receive the reply given to the transgressors that *"Did We not give you long enough life."*

May Allah bestow on us the ability to choose the right path. Ameen.

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